

# CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL OF POPULAR LITERATURE

Science and Arts.

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 128.

SATURDAY, JUNE 14, 1856.

PRICE 1½d.

## A DAY AT WILDBAD.

Nor that there is anything remarkable in a day at Wildbad; but the place is the favourite resort of the great ones of the earth—of those who are employed in making history for the benefit of posterity—and one likes to have a peep at its denizens and their daily goings on.

Russians, Italians, French, English, Germans—all meet here in quest of health; occasionally a South American, or a 'gentleman from Honolulu,' adds piquancy to the gathering. Among the distinguished visitors expected this summer, is the Empress Dowager of Russia; and if, as is reported, the Emperor Alexander means to visit her at Wildbad, the Russian monarch will doubtless meet many of his recent foes, mingled together with his own brave subjects—all alike seeking to repair the injuries received amid the strife of war. In one honourable respect, Wildbad is distinguished from all other German watering-places—it has no gaming-table: thanks to the king of Württemberg, who has had the moral courage to prohibit this attraction; while some other German princes have debased themselves by drawing a revenue from it.

We had been wandering through the Nassau *bads*, with which our countrymen are so familiar ever since the graphic pen of Sir Francis Head imparted an air of romance to the very pigs of those localities. We had enjoyed the loveliness of Baden-Baden, supreme alike in beauty and in fashion; and from thence a few hours' drive across a wild and mountainous tract brought us into the pleasant winding valley of the Enz, whose mountain-sides are veiled by the dark pines of the Black Forest.

It seemed to us, on entering Wildbad, as if we had gone back at least a century, everything looked so gray and gloomy, so primitive and antique; but as we rattled across the *platz*, we found ourselves in a newer world. The bath-house, a handsome modern edifice in the Moresque style, rose up before us; while beneath a long arcade rested or lounged a throng of the *beau monde*, listening to the music of a band playing in the centre of the square. A little further on, our horses galloped across a wooden bridge, by which the Enz is spanned; and at the sound of our driver's horn we found ourselves followed by a host of men and boys, who escorted us to the grand entrance of the Bellevue, an imposing-looking hotel, facing the river Enz, and where we were received with due courtesy by Herr Thoma, its worthy and obliging landlord.

The bright freshness of a summer day tempted us out early on the ensuing morning to join the crowd of

water-drinkers and bathers at the *bad haus* and on the *platz*. There, the routine was much the same as at other German watering-places; and we need only remark, that the water, which is soft and limpid, possesses a certain degree of life, which saves it from the insipidity usually characteristic of tasteless warm water.

It is now eleven o'clock A.M. The sun is pouring down its fervid beams into the valley of the Enz; and yet there is a freshness in the voice and aspect of nature that wins one forth from indoor occupations to enjoy the outer world of Wildbad. The tall dark pines look grave and cool even in the glare of a mid-summer sun; the glancing waters of the Enz sound cheerily in the still noonday air. Within doors, however, all is silent, for most of the visitors at Wildbad are *making their cure*, and, in obedience to medical orders, are now reposing after their morning baths. The long corridors of the Bellevue are as still as if it were the witching-hour of midnight. Only a courier or a *valet de place* is seen lounging near his master's door, with a guide-book or a newspaper to while away the tedious hours. We, being happily free from the inflexible sway of the doctors at Wildbad, descend the broad handsome staircase, duly respond to the courtesies of the ever-present, ever-watchful house-porter, and quickly find ourselves upon the broad terrace lying between the Bellevue and the Enz. All around breathes an air of quiet yet cheerful repose. Three or four invalided soldiers, still in the prime of life, are resting beneath a wide-spreading acacia, upon one of the many seats which are placed at intervals on each side of the road. They are talking, reading, laughing; a group of children are playing by their side. One of the little ones seizes a pair of crutches which are lying on the seat, and pretends to limp along with them. The young soldier to whom the crutches belong looks kindly at the urchin, and a sad smile passes over his countenance as he observes the mimic semblance of a suffering which is to him but too true and stern a reality. Two or three tiny cradle-carriages are there, from beneath whose linen *cafeche* hoods and down coverlets peep forth infant faces, which seem to glance inquiringly upon the world around them. They are the wisest, gravest little faces I ever beheld. These tiny vehicles are drawn along by children scarcely older than the baby-occupants of the carriage. The charioteers are usually little boys, who in England would be clad in frocks and pinafores; but here, no sooner can they toddle about than they are invested with all the dignity of jacket and trousers, so ample in their dimensions that the little fellows look like miniature

Dutchmen. They are very tender of their infant charges, whom they draw along with gentle care, occasionally leaving the cradle for a few minutes beneath the shade of some tree, while they play with their companions. It is a pretty sight, the groups of cradles with their quiet composed babies; and the little children playing without noise or rudeness, and every now and then running over to the cradles and kissing the wee things with hearty affection.

On one side of the terrace are some open booths, in which are displayed many tempting wares. A Tyrolean glove-merchant, in the picturesque costume of his country, is conspicuous amongst the vendors; then there are straw-hats and tin toys, and clocks from the Black Forest, glass and steel ware from Stuttgart, embroidery from St Gall, and lace from Saxony. We linger a few moments among these pretty things; but the *anlage* (public walk) looks so tempting before us, that we feel half inclined to plunge into the long alleys of rose-coloured horse-chestnuts which cluster along the winding course of the river, looking fresh and joyous in the summer sun. Our attention, however, is suddenly attracted by a crowd of people gathered together on the wooden bridge; so we turn our steps that way, wishing to have a glimpse of village holiday-life, for this is St John's Day, which is still observed among the Lutherans as a sort of festival. There is an air of excitement amongst the villagers, which is quickly accounted for, when we learn that they are watching the approach of a raft on its seaward voyage. We, too, bend eagerly forward to view its progress. In a few moments, the long mass of pine-trees comes bounding over the rugged stream. The foremost three trees are closely bound together, and more loosely linked with those that follow, each succeeding joint being composed of a greater number of logs, and consequently increasing in size, so as to impart a sort of rude symmetry to this primitive float.

Upon the foremost joint stood a tall, powerful-looking man, whose limbs were encased in a huge pair of jackboots; coarse trousers and jacket, with a broad-brimmed hat, completed his costume. He held within his grasp a long stout pole, with which he guided the raft. Further back, were three or four other men similarly attired, and each standing erect with a pole in his hands. There was a moment of intense excitement as they neared the bridge, for there the river is full of rocks and rapids. The helmsman stood erect upon his slippery standing-place. The whole lengthy, cumbrous-looking machine seemed to writhe and twist itself upon the foaming stream. As one joint of the raft rose above the water, another part would sink beneath its surface. The steersman bent down a moment while passing beneath the low-arched bridge. The narrow log upon which he stood sank beneath the waters, which dashed themselves against his person. Can he keep his footing?—or will he not rather be engulfed in the foaming deep? Another moment decided the matter, for, on issuing out at the other side, we beheld him standing as firm and erect as if he were treading the greensward of his own native valley. There was something proud and noble in his bearing, as if he were conscious of being superior to the dangers and difficulties of his position. In England, we doubt not, he would have been rewarded by a hearty cheer for his skill and intrepidity; but the German crowd only looked on at the scene with placid interest. A few moments more, and the long raft has glided out of sight, while we cannot but inwardly wish it God-speed upon its way to the ocean.

We now glance around us at the crowd, which is chiefly composed of village holiday-folk. The women, young and old, are all bareheaded; and their rich brown hair, divided down the back, is braided in two

plaits, which are wreathed in a circlet round their heads. It is a simple and becoming mode of head-dress.

One group particularly attracted our attention. It consisted of an aged grandfather, a young married couple, and a little boy—all dressed in the holiday costume of Teinach, a village in the Black Forest. Fine, ingenuous-looking people they were; and the boy, a handsome intelligent child, was led by his grandfather, who seemed engrossed in purchasing fruit for his little companion. The costume of the men very much resembled an old court-dress. Their dark coats were richly laced and buttoned, and their nether garments clasped at the knees with large silver buckles. They wore on their heads small cocked-hats. The dress of the child was nearly the same, only that his hat was of a more fanciful form, having on the depressed centre of the crown a sprig of light gold ornaments, looking like a spray of golden flowers drooping on his brow. He looked shy, and yet pleased at our notice; and it was with regret we found ourselves obliged to take a hurried leave of our new acquaintances, being reminded of the approach of one o'clock, the inexorable hour of dinner at Wildbad, as at many other German watering-places. As we enter the Bellevue Hotel, a horn is heard to sound outside, and a handsome britzka drives up to the door. We are informed that it is an Austrian envoy at one of the German courts who has just arrived.

And now, after some slight preparation of toilet, we are seated in the dinner-saloon among a party of seventy or eighty persons. It is a motley company. At our end of the table are a few English, intermingled with German princes and barons, with a Brazilian *attaché* and a Bavarian lady-in-waiting. Towards the other end of the table are Prince Galitzin, with his lovely wife and daughter; a Russian general—a Finlander—who lost his arm at the battle of Leipsic; a German prince and his family; and the Austrian *chargé d'affaires*. The interval between the two parties is filled up with odds and ends of foreigners, amongst whom are one or two keen, clever-looking Jewish Frankfurt merchants. When we are all seated, a neat, dapper-looking man enters the room, with a quick, measured step, and lays his hat and gold-tipped cane upon a side-table. There is a decided, self-possessed air about him that attracts attention. His name is whispered to us at once: it is General Changarnier. The only vacant seat is one opposite the Russian party; accordingly he is placed there, and the position seems but little to his taste, as he maintains the most absolute silence during the whole repast. A long and formal meal it is, but abounding in all the delicacies that can be procured from far and near.

The *maitre d'hôtel*, Herr Thoma, has various functions to fulfil, combining in his own person the duties of a host and an attendant. He carves, or rather *chops* all the dishes upon a large board, at a side-table, assists in carrying them round, and then watches over his guests to see if they are properly served and taken care of. At the dessert, a German noble invites him to take wine with him, and then he seats himself at the same table with the princes of the land, and chats as freely as if he were one of the party. There is a *naïveté*, and yet an entire absence of familiarity, in this mode of social life which has a peculiar charm, but which perhaps could scarcely be realised in any country where the line of demarcation between classes is less clearly defined than in Germany.

The dinner lasts till past two o'clock. Before the party separate, tickets are handed round the table for a concert which is about to take place in the garden of the Bad Hotel. The price of each ticket is about eightpence! We adjourn thither half an hour afterwards, and find a military band playing national and operatic airs. The music is excellent. No form is

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observed amongst the company, who are seated in groups or around small tables in the garden. Some ladies are knitting, some embroidering, some sipping coffee. Many of the gentlemen are smoking and drinking beer. At about four o'clock, all is over, and we withdraw to our own apartments.

And soon afterwards, before our fashionable world at home think of stirring out for their afternoon ride in the Park, we in this primitive world, whether we are princes or parvenus, are beginning our evening-life with its simple pleasures and occupations. We prepare for a ramble in the Black Forest, and begin our ascent by a pretty lane, whose hedges abound in honeysuckle and wild-roses. We enter the forest by a smooth and pleasant path, made by order of the king of Würtemberg, whose care in this respect has reached very far into the depths of the forest, where have been cut numberless paths; and here and there are found also rustic seats and summer-houses placed in the most picturesque spots, from whence may be obtained favourable views of the valley.

And now we are fairly in the forest, with the tall dark pines rising thickly about us, sometimes alone, and sometimes two or three clustering closely together like fluted pillars springing up towards heaven. Long wreaths of pendent white moss hang round many of the aged or fallen trees. Here and there we find a group of spreading beech-trees. The air is filled with an aromatic fragrance peculiar to the pine-forests; but rarely does one hear the song of birds, few of which are to be found here. The stillness of the air is suddenly broken by the sound of some sweet tinkling bells. We look around us, and see a herd of small cattle and a few goats winding their way down the hill through the tangled and rocky passes of the forest. Each of the leaders has a bell round its neck, which it seems to ring with an air of conscious pride and superiority. They are guided by two or three young peasant-girls, who, as they pass us by, give the accustomed kindly greeting of 'Guten abend.'

A moment or two later, we meet with a gushing torrent, that forces its way through masses of granite rocks, as they lie half imbedded in moss upon the mountain-side. As we approach the crown of the forest, the repeated sound of the woodman's axe strikes upon our ear. On reaching the summit, we find a party of wood-cutters, felling some noble trees, which are destined for a voyage upon the world of waters. A fine hardy race are these wood-cutters, and full of that true and homely courtesy which delights in giving information to strangers. They shew us one of the slides by which these giants of the forest are hurled into the valley, preparatory to being formed into rafts. This operation takes place in winter during the snowy season; and it is, we are told, quite appalling to witness these avalanches of trees rushing down the steep mountain-side, as if ready to overwhelm every object within their reach.

So great a charm have these forest-shades that we are loath to leave them; but evening is advancing, and we wish before its close to witness the twilight life of Wildbad: so we hasten down the rugged forest-paths, and before long, we find ourselves once more in the Königs Platz, the centre of fashionable life at Wildbad. Here we meet a crowd of visitors, thronging together beneath the long arcade of the Bath Hotel, or lounging about the square. Many notabilities are here: the Prince of Tour and Taxis—or, as a Cockney called him, the Prince of *Tolls and Taxes*—whose name is so familiar to us in England, as connected with the postal arrangements in Germany. He is a tall, strongly-built man, with marked features, and bronzed complexion; intelligent in countenance, and proud in bearing, having large gold rings pendent from his ears, and a long pipe ever curling from his lips; careless in his costume, which usually consisted of

a gray shooting-jacket and cloth foraging-cap; and not over-punctilious in the courtesies of life, at least towards the higher classes of society—though in his intercourse with the peasantry and poorer classes of his fellow-men, nothing could exceed the kindness of his demeanour. Prince Sergius Galitzin, with his charming family—the princess and her youthful daughter being both of them very captivating personages, their dark lustrous eyes harmonising well with the clear olive hue of their complexions, and with the gentle elasticity of their slight and graceful forms. Both in their aspect and bearing, there was a fascinating mélange of the softness and languor of Oriental loveliness with the light and animated piquancy so characteristic of French beauty. One of the younger members of the family, a boy of five or six years old, was clad in the Polish costume, with embroidered tunic and Polish cap, full white trousers and sleeves, the latter being confined at the wrists with crimson bands. A dark-eyed boy he was, slight in form, and full of talk and activity; and his native language sounded sweetly from his lips as he chatted by his mother's side. Near the princesses lounged a young German baron, descended from the celebrated Götz of Berlichingen, of the Iron Hand. No *iron-handed* hero, however, was this scion of a noble house, but a gay, lively young officer of rather distinguished appearance, who seemed better suited to be a knight of modern Germany than of those rude ages in which his forefather lived and won for himself the deathless praises of poets and troubadours. On the other side of the Princesses Galitzin, strolled Baron von Handel, the Austrian envoy at the court of Würtemberg—a fashionable, courtier-like person, who was evidently more inclined to associate with the Russian than the English party at Wildbad.

In a quiet corner of the arcade sat the millionaire, Baron Rothschild, in deep conversation with General Changarnier. Never was there a more striking contrast than between the two personages thus engaged in social intercourse. Changarnier, although stern and melancholy in aspect, was still in the full vigour of life, and his every movement betrayed the prompt and energetic soldier; while the princely banker, surrounded by every appliance which wealth could command, bore that impress of languor and disease which too truly told that life, with all its gains and losses, was rapidly fading away from his grasp.

Another celebrity, also in the decline of life, might be observed resting on one of the seats in the arcade—General Barboza da Sylva, a retired Brazilian ambassador, who seemed to enjoy the scene in quiet placidity, without the aid of cigar or conversation. His excellency having recovered from paralysis by the use of the Wildbad waters, was now a *habitué* of the place, visiting it each returning summer with a numerous retinue of valets, cooks, and other attendants, who were installed with their master in the Bellevue Hotel, where the *ex-diplomate*, a portly, quiet-looking gentleman, lived in perfect retirement in his own apartments, and surrounded by his own people. Many other noble personages—Poles, Germans, and Russians of less illustrious names—were to be seen amongst the crowd, together with French and English *à discretion*.

The scene was a pleasant lively one; and conversation flowed on easily in defiance of the band, which was performing its usual evening part in the centre of the square. We mingled in the social crowd, and enjoyed the *abandon* of the scene until twilight gave its silent warning to the invalids that it was now the fitting time for them to return home.

We, like the rest, retired to our own apartments; and after a day of German life, were not displeased to find ourselves seated round an English-looking tea-table, and enjoying the 'cheerful, not inebriating cup,' together with the quiet domestic talk of dear Old England.



At nine o'clock, the village-bells rang out a sort of curfew; and on inquiring from our German attendant what it meant, she told us that it was a summons to every one to return to his own home, and also a call to united prayer and praise, which was responded to by all good Christians to whatever communion they might belong.\*

An hour later, all was perfectly still and silent within our hotel. Doubtless, its inmates were preparing by an early sleep for the recommencement of their 'cure' on the morrow. In the village, too, all was dark and still. Here and there, a solitary lamp, gleaming out of some window, betrayed the presence of Englishmen and of the later habits of their daily life.

So ended our day at Wildbad, a place which must ever live among our pleasant recollections.

### THE POOR MAN AT MARKET.

THE appointment of a Committee of the House of Commons to inquire into the important questions connected with the adulteration of articles of general consumption, and especially of food, has revived the subject at a period, and with an efficient practical bearing, which, it may be hoped, will lead to very beneficial results. Every individual is deeply interested in the investigation of these mysteries. Upon its success depends, to an immense extent, the comfort of the community, not to talk of health and life. It is, therefore, the more satisfactory to look for a searching development of these intricate secrets at a time that promises to be more auspicious to their right and full understanding, than any preceding date at which they attracted parliamentary and public attention, as in 1783 and 1828-9; when, after considerable excitement and outcry, the matter ended—to use a common phrase, only too often applicable to similar movements—by coming to nothing. Now, however, we seem to be more awake to the enormity of this scandalous system; and the return of peace will enable the nation to apply its energies to the remedy of a condition of things which it is absolutely appalling to contemplate.

But it is not the sole object of the present paper to enter upon the wide war-field between fraud and chemistry, clever composition and scientific analysis, ingenious invention and as ingenious detection; the combatants are well matched, and there will be a strange and fierce fight before either gives in: it is rather desired to shew, even were adulteration less commonly practised than it obviously is, how much the poor man suffers from other causes, and how susceptible his circumstances are of improvement. For it is his lot to be obliged not only to buy inferior and spurious articles, but to buy them at enormous

prices. From this, no circumspection can save him; and his marketing is one series of imposition, from the 1st of January to the 31st of December; while, as if to add insult to injury, he is assured at every shop to which he resorts, that it is the cheapest in London, and yet everything of the best quality; and at every stall, that all he sees is the freshest and most genuine that can be procured for love or money. So far from such being the case, it is the trash he is supplied with; and the exorbitant profits of the sellers would, in an aggregate of ten years, reach a sum which might figure not diminutively by the side of the national debt itself.

In order to illustrate this in the way of its constant operation, it will be expedient to take the examples from two classes—namely, the 'genteel' of small incomes, and the actual poor.

Mr Smith is a clerk on a salary of £80 a year, and has appearances to keep up. He inhabits a small suburban cottage in a cleanly row at the rent of £16 per annum; as yet large enough for him, Mrs Smith, a quiet delicate body, and their two children, Mary, aged six, and Margaret, two—poor little George, who ranged between them, having been carried off by the hooping-cough, which refused to yield to spurious medicine. It may well be supposed that rigid economy and vigilant management are essential to carry on the affairs of a *ménage* like this with any degree of decency and comfort; and Mrs Smith, with the aid of Sarah, the washerwoman's daughter, almost in her teens, devotes herself to the task with the most praiseworthy assiduity. Sarah enters in the morning to light the fire or fires, and prepare the breakfast things. There is no great supply of coals, for they are bought by the sack, or at most two and a half sacks at a time—seemingly a large order, when compared with the purchases of the washerwoman, who, together with the wages of her husband, a labourer at 2s. a day when in perfect health, her own earnings at the tub, and the 1s. 6d. to Sarah, contrives to average from 17s. 6d. to no less than 20s. a week. But this is ready-money, not quarterly; and the laborious Delvers are in many things not worse off than their neighbours the Smiths, and in some a good deal better; only, they usually deal, perhaps, in still smaller quantities—as, for instance, in coals; and here they are, accordingly, a trifle more imposed upon. Thus, for the best screened coals, charged to the wealthy, who buy them in tons, at say 22s. or 23s. per ton, Mr Smith pays for his sack 2s. 6d. or 2s. 8d., as the case may be, raising the price to 25s. or 26s. 8d.; and the poorer Delvers, going to the shed for a hundredweight or half a hundredweight, have to pay 1s. 6d. for the one, and 9d. for the other—that is, at the rate of 30s. per ton. But this is not the worst. From the millionaire to the pauper, it is true, every one is exposed to short weight; but there is a check upon the higher range; upon the lower, none; and the latter class of buyers must take what is given them on being justly weighed, though the beam has been tilted to some purpose, and their hundredweight lacks several pounds of its due weight. And, be it observed, it is not even pretended that they receive 'Walls-end,' or similar black diamond celebrities—they are only assured of the 'best coals,' which are a mixture of sea-coal (it may be in small quantity), Welsh Culm, and Bovey (of inferior quality), together with stones and dirt, not accidentally present, and pretty well saturated with water, which, curiously enough, runs innocuously off the fine large coal, but is plentifully imbibed by the usual small coal-shed rubbish.

But it is eight o'clock a.m., and Sarah has tidily laid the breakfast upon the neat round table. Mary and Margaret, spoon in hand, lean over their basins of bread and milk; and this morning their parents are about to indulge in cocoa instead of tea. A small

\* In Württemberg, the response is made in a very beautiful way. On hearing the curfew-bell, the people sing an evening-hymn, of which the following is a rough translation:—

Abide with us, Lord Jesu Christ,  
Now in the darkening shades of night;  
O that the sunshine of Thy word  
May ne'er withdraw its healing light!  
Grant in these last and evil days,  
That we, through faith's sustaining power,  
Thy word and sacraments may keep  
Unblemished to life's latest hour.  
While time is given, may we have grace  
Each talent wisely to employ;  
And when life's day doth sink to rest,  
May we repose in peace and joy!  
Ah, gracious Lord, what meaneth this,  
The tolling of the curfew knell?  
'The end and aim of thy brief life  
It doth with voice of warning tell;  
For quickly as hath fled the day,  
So swiftly speeds life's span away:  
Then strive each moment so to spend  
That death may meet thee as a friend.  
Thus will the curfew's saddening voice  
Win thee to hope and to rejoice.'

glass of muscovado sugar, a remaining portion of milk, two or three slices of dry toast, and half a pound of butter, just brought in from the miscellaneous 'warehouse,' alias shop, in the adjacent street, with which Mr Smith runs a small current account, complete the preparations for the morning repast. The Delvers have already breakfasted on oatmeal strabout and treacle, including a due proportion of sand and refuse from the sugar-bakers, and gone respectively to work—John with a hunch of brown loaf in his pouch, and his wife with a trust in Providence. Mr Smith's sand is in his sugar, together with some 20 per cent. of salt, which Delver had in less proportion in his porridge; and as for the bread, there was little to choose between the two. Smith's was white and light; Delver's, brown and full weight. Smith's white was a penny more, because it was made of the 'first flour,' whilst Delver's brown was only 'second middlings;' yet the actual difference was wonderfully slight. Delver's had, if anything, less alum, and more potatoes, bone-ashes, and clay; but Smith's was more liberally provided in Indian-corn, rice, gypsum, plaster of Paris, and chalk. Both paid the full value of pure flour, which neither of the bakers could possibly get from the millers, who hold them in thralldom, as brewers sometimes hold publicans: even the original wheat was inferior grain or damaged imports. In these respects, however, the rich are not entirely free from the taxes on the poor; and the latter only suffer more, because with them bread is the staff of life, while among the upper classes it forms but a moderate portion of their nutritious food.

The milk and butter still remain. The itinerant milkman boasts that he sells at the same price he pays at the dairy; but instead of having merely his trouble for reward, if you consider the quantity of water he introduces—say a third—coloured with annatto, and the sheep and calves' brains—not to mention those of horses' from the knackers—it will appear that the *Mieau* cry is by no means unprofitable either to man or maid. Water, likewise, forms a considerable part of the poor man's, as well as the rich man's butter, but is accompanied to the former with lard, fat, and flour.

But we must not forget the cocoa luxury. That cake for which Mr Smith paid fourpence was worth exactly one penny, being a chemical compound—for chemistry is at least as able to manufacture as to detect strange substitutes—and consisting of the nuts after the lamp-oil had been expressed, and the nibs rolled out on the floor, and made into saleable forms with bullocks' blood, suet, and perhaps a little soap, as may be seen in the unctuous globules which float on the top of the reeking cup. Delver and Mrs Delver now then treat themselves to a penny-cup of this nourishing beverage; but you may lay it down as a rule, almost without exception, that there are no cheap pennyworths of the kind sold about town which are not pernicious fabrications. Of coffee and its chicory, scorched horse-beans, roasted pease, and other component ingredients, nothing need be said. The stuff is weighed like other stuffs, and is deficient like them.

And this is the peculiar grievance of the lower orders, who are obliged to purchase in small quantities. They are exposed to the almost universal cheat of false weighing—not so much by means of detectable false weights—as by sleight-of-hand. The articles, as we have observed, being invariably of the most inferior description, would be doubly dear at the prices charged for them; but when there are superadded the thimble-rig dexterity to which we allude, and the ingenious contrivance of the beautiful porcelain scale, familiar to counters where provisions are sold, we may easily conceive how extravagantly the poor man lives. It is no doubt curious to remark that these scales are never poised, and are never seen without a small weight, or several small weights, in the metallic side.

Butter, bacon, cheese, &c., affect the porcelain; and the porcelain, as has been detected by acute magistrates, has sometimes a hollow in the bottom, where soft lead may be slid or removed, and even the hollow globe ornaments hanging from the suspenders can be turned to advantage. These are no mere suspicions: the facts were proved in police-courts ten or twelve years ago—and there has been no falling off since—as was shewn not long ago in a City sally, where two inspectors, in the course of a few months, convicted above 800 shopkeepers of using unstamped measures, though with no fraudulent intent, and nearly 250 of employing grossly defective weights, measures, and false balances. The latter offenders—publicans, butchers, chandlers, bakers, and coal-dealers—were severally fined and imprisoned, and for a season there was considerable improvement; but the watch was taken off, and the practices were resumed without let or hindrance.

But to return to our direct exemplification of the poor man's extravagant outlay—for it is the melancholy condition of poverty that it must run into extravagance—we shall bring our friend Smith home to dinner after the labours of the desk are over, and he again enjoys the society of his placid wife, who, dear soul, has been providing a meal for him as luxurious as their limited means can afford. Of all corruptions in existence, the corruption of butchers' meat is not only the most inimical to health, but the most disgusting. The seizures continually occurring of diseased cattle, prove the extensive prevalence of this abominable traffic. But there is in the lowest deep a lower still; and if all the horrors of 'horse slaughtermen,' with their sales of horseflesh, for conversion into the viands of the poor were unfolded, the disclosure would be intolerable. But Smith's pudding was merely of second-rate demerit, at first-rate cost, and three ounces less in weight than the quantity entered on his bill. If this is merely half-an-ounce—a very moderate estimate—deficient in every pound of butcher's meat retailed in London, what do you think would this amount to at the end of the year? If we mentioned the reality, it would look like an absurd exaggeration.

Potatoes by the pound, of good, bad, and indifferent qualities intermixed, cost the poor man at market twice the sum paid by the purchaser in easier circumstances by the gallon, bushel, or sack. Stale vegetables at fresh prices are also the lot of the poor.

Of tea, though often and much adulterated, there is less reason to complain now than in former times; but there is one great mistake among the poor, against which they should be warned—that is, the purchase of tea-dust, under the delusion that it is the flower and essential product of the plant. It is, on the contrary, a vile mixture of the sweepings of shops, spoiled samples shewn in the windows, with the débris of flies, bees, wasps, and creeping things, carpet-sweepings of hotels, and stalks of beets, ground together in a mill, and presented as a valuable catch in the poor man's market.

In beer, the poor man suffers most only because he is the principal consumer, and depends upon it for a portion of his daily sustenance; for the adulterations, be they what they may—burnt sugar in lime-water for body, and green vitriol for head or froth, or aught else—affect all classes alike who deal at the public-house. The best is generally to be had where there is a quick draught, and the house is much frequented by coal-heavers, market-men, cabmen, and fancy-men of all descriptions.

Without dwelling on such trifles as pepper of burnt crust, sea-salt, and oxide of lead; mustard of turmeric, flour, cayenne, and gypsum; vinegar of distilled wood and sulphuric acid; poisonous coloured sweetmeats—rare gifts for the young ones, and the rarer the better, as they are dangerous depôts of red-lead, vermilion, and verdigris; or the consoling pipe of dock, cabbage,

or lettuce leaves, steeped in tobacco-liquor, liquorice-juice, &c., for all which the poor man pays more than the rich purchaser does for the superior articles—we have gone through enough to shew that some intervention and check is loudly called for to put an end to these noxious frauds.

In this land of freedom it may be difficult to devise an adequate remedy, but surely something more than at present might be done by ancient court-leets or modern vestries, police, or central commissioners. Might not companies be formed, with limited liability, to open bazaars for the sale of genuine articles? A few such combinations, if honestly and properly conducted, would soon bring the majority to their senses, and produce a reform of inestimable importance.

#### FOUR SISTERS.

##### IN THREE PARTS.—PART II.

THAT day, and the next, and the next, went by. Mr Keith did not come to see us; and it was a rare circumstance for three days to pass without a visit from him; besides, it was drawing near the time of his intended departure for home. Already it was Monday in the week 'early in which' he had told us he should leave London.

Tuesday came. It made me feel unwontedly calm and steady to note the painful nervousness of my sister: she started at every sound; her colour varied almost every minute; her hands trembled so that she could hardly guide the needle with which she was busied. It happened that it was some holiday in the city, and my father was at home that morning. After he had finished his newspaper, he was at leisure to remark appearances around him, and he fixed his clear, piercing eyes upon poor Grace, in a sudden humour of investigation, which fell rather hardly upon her.

'Why, what is the matter with you? You're not well, Grace. Ella, do you observe your sister? Is she going to faint, or have the measles, or hooping-cough?'

'No, papa: she has had both those last disorders; and the first is not in her way at all. Is it, Grace?' said I, in desperate sportiveness.

'Something is wrong, though. I think you stoop too much over that flower-working nonsense, my dear. You look moped, and as if you had not quite enough air to breathe in. I should be really glad for you to take advantage of Mr and Miss Keith's invitation, and go for a week or two to Byford. In the meantime, put on your bonnet, and we will go in an omnibus to one of the parks, and freshen you up a little.'

To such a mandate as this, resistance would have appeared impossible to either of us; besides, I was well content that she should go; and I believe she was perfectly indifferent whether she stayed at home or went abroad, sat still or walked. So, presently, the two sallied forth.

Harriet was closeted in her own room, finishing an 'article;' so I settled myself by the parlour-window, with a task of needle-work, from which I occasionally looked up to stare vaguely, and but little regarding what I saw, through the dingy gauze-blind, into the street. London, sometimes brilliant, often gay, and even occasionally picturesque in its aspects, is never more cheerless, never more painfully and evidently 'flat, stale, and unprofitable,' than on a morning when spring sunshine glorifies the heavens and gladdens the earth, and the air is thrilled with that unspeakable joyfulness of buoyant new life that is like the first awakening of the year out of its winter bondage of cold and dreariness, its first glimpse of the bright Beyond into which it is destined to live. But what do we know of the spring who dwell in cities, among

streets, where endless barriers of tall buildings intercept the free sunshine, and pestiferous vapours taint the air that comes from heaven so sweet and fresh; and in a proud, wealthy metropolis, moreover, where worldliness and conventionalism are perpetual vicegerents, seeking to tyrannise over the very hearts of their subjects, and doing their utmost to stifle all thoughts that are holy, all aspirations that are noble and pure!

I was thinking thus as I looked out into the street. The pavement glared with sunshine; the dark houses rose gloomily against the sky; half the genteel families of the neighbourhood were walking abroad, taking advantage of the 'fine day' to go visiting or shopping. They passed under my window, in gay groups, chattering, murmuring, laughing; and the rustle of their dresses mingled with the distant street-sounds that came distinctly through the clear air—the cries of itinerant green-grocers and fruit-women; and the tinkling of a bird-organ in the adjoining terrace, persistently keeping up its thin *staccato* to the rhythm of the *Lass o' Gowerie*.

I looked, and I heard, but I regarded but very little, for my thoughts were busy. My fingers mechanically moved about my work; but my eyes were bent fixedly on the window. I saw every passer-by, vaguely, and with indifference: I was as if out of the world, standing on the outer verge of what had been my life. With what a plunge I came back again! A quick light step on the pavement, a figure passing under the window, and stopping at our door. I started from my seat, and then stood still in the middle of the room, feeling for a single minute a strange kind of incredulous alarm. Then I went to meet her—Ellenor Keith.

I remember the sad look of her brown eyes, and how her mouth trembled as she came towards me. I knew she was in trouble: I thought at once that her brother was ill, and I asked her if it was not so.

'No, not ill,' she said; 'but a great trial has come to him. I had to bring him the news yesterday, that some one he loves dearly is dangerously, hopelessly ill, at Naples. He started at once. He bade me come and tell you before I returned home. Yes—you need not say a word; I know you feel for him—for me too.'

I did not say a word.

'It is so cruelly, cruelly hard!' she went on excitedly. 'It has been all along so sad for him. Her father would not let them be engaged for two years; and the two years are within a month of completion. He expected them home at the end of May. Oh, what a cruel May it will be for him! My brother! my brother! If I could die instead.'

I felt vaguely astonished at her passion, for she was usually a reserved, calm woman; but I tried to comfort her.

'Perhaps,' said I, 'she is not so fatally ill; perhaps she will not die.'

'It is too slender a chance to hang by. She is ill of a malignant fever. If she is alive when he reaches her, it will be more than he dares hope.'

'Of a malignant fever,' I repeated.

'Even I cannot think of his safety just now; I cannot look forward; only, if he is ill, I shall go to him. He is all I have in the world, Ella.'

'I know,' said I; and I stood straight and silent, while she leaned her head down in her two hands, and sobbed strong, convulsive sobs. When these ceased, she rose up, took my hands, called me her dear friend, said it had comforted her to tell me all her grief; then, suddenly, she asked:

'Where is Little Grace?'

I drew my hands away—ran to the window—and looked out.

'I expect her home soon; she is not well: she has gone out with my father for fresh air.'

'Ay, you were both coming down to us, Gerard



told me. He told me a great deal of Grace: you know, she is so like his Lillian.'

'Is she?'

'He says he loved looking at her, and watching her; she was, in her childish way, so like'—

I don't know what I replied: my heart swelled, rebellious and bitter, and I had strongly to restrain the passionate reproach that was bursting for utterance. Ellinor said but little more, and then bade me good-bye: she never noticed any difference in my manner, it was such a quiet manner always. Just as she left the door, something she said touched me, and I kissed her hastily, almost ashamed; she lingered then to say a few words:

'Thanks, Ella. I know you love us both; and you, who know what sister-love is, may guess something of its pains, too.'

Ay. It was true. I shut the door upon her, and went back into the room, to sit still and think, and try and get my thoughts quiet and in order, before—before I should see Grace.

I have thought sometimes that the power of suffering is, after all, limited, and its measure apportioned. 'So far shalt thou feel, and no further,' may be a divine ordinance; and often this uttermost power is taxed as much for a mere bruise, as for the wound that never heals, and that drains the source of life itself.

The week that followed that wild, weird spring-morning, was not, I think, more full of pain than many had been before it. I do not remember details, but I retain an impression of my little sister during that time—the pitiful efforts she made to move about the house, and look, and talk, and laugh—more than was natural to her. And, for the rest, all was dim, and there was no silence in my ears day or night; and outside the house, the sunshine glared hotly, and a feverish stupor seemed in the air.

Then came a letter from Ellinor Keith. Lillian was better, but he lay ill with the fever at Naples, whither his sister was on her way to join him.

All this time, Grace kept up in health and in all externals in a manner that to me, knowing her as I did, was marvellous. Only when we were alone, the seemings slipped off for a while; and she would pass many hours in unmovable silence, all her faculties seeming in a state almost of collapse. She hardly seemed to think or to feel at all; and she sat with her eyes never lifted from her lap, and her face quite marble in its expressionless repose. I could not solve the mystery of my sister's mind, then; I could only watch in a sort of dim anxiety, that was very hard to bear; but I kept strong, and well, and vigorous. It was a great mercy; though—may Heaven forgive me!—I did not feel it to be so in those heavy, dreadful days.

It was on one of those days that a packet arrived from Naples. It was directed to my father, in Mr Keith's handwriting, and contained, besides his own letter to him, one to me, from Ellinor. The purport of both was to beg that we would take possession of their house at Byford for as long as we liked, as they would probably remain abroad for a year to come. Ellinor, in her note to me, said that her brother was quite himself again; but Lillian—they feared the fever had left behind it a yet more insidious, fatal enemy. 'It is too cruel a thought to speak of,' she wrote; 'and I do not think he suspects yet, or he could not be so bright and hopeful as he is. You cannot imagine his love for her, Ella: you would hardly believe it or understand'—

I crushed the letter. It was not till afterwards that I had time to feel dismayed at the new turn events seemed to be taking. My father strongly inclined to accept the offer of the house at Byford for the time they were to remain away. My faint remonstrance seemed only to confirm his desire; and two evenings

after, he asked me if we would be ready to travel the following week. Thus it was settled we were to go.

When I told Grace, she seemed to revive strangely at the idea, and she said she was glad. She liked the idea of living there, and seeing the places she had heard me speak of so often.

And so, one day in mid-June, our household left the drear London square; and that chapter of life was closed up for ever.

Yes, that chapter of life was ended, for me: the throes of passionate feeling, the spasms of sentimental affliction had been suffered and endured, and the pitiful memory of them was all that remained. Existence grew too busy to permit much recurrence to them. Troubles came thick and fast; actual tangible difficulties had to be fought; and the warfare of the soul, the distresses of the heart, became, or I thought they became, of very secondary importance.

I was mistaken—they only slept, they did not die; yet in their sleep they lost much of their distinctive individuality. They awoke, not less real, but less monstrous. They took their fitting place; they assumed their actual proportions. I could recognise the truth, that even a woman, loving, clinging, parasitical as is her nature, possesses other faculties besides her affections, and other sentient, vital capacities of suffering, besides a heart. I think men and women might with advantage take a lesson from each other. Men cultivate their hearts too little, and, sometimes, their heads too much—an error no one can charge upon us. Let us exchange to some degree: let women think—and men permit themselves to feel more than they are used to do. Why ignore any part of the being God created? Can we not see with our eyes, and hear with our ears, at one and the same time, and with no detriment to either sense? Verily, though I am a woman, I was meant to live my life not with one side of my nature alone. Love is sweet, love is divine; but so is life—the life God gave me, places before me, and watches over.

I have said thus to myself many scores of times during the years that have passed since our settlement at Byford. I faced fate almost defiantly at first; afterwards, my courage grew calmer and more true.

We had been in the country about six weeks only, when the mercantile house in which my father held a responsible post failed; and all that he had saved went in the general wreck. It was such a blow to the old man, that his health sunk under it; and it soon became evident that he would never be able to undertake a similar situation. When his physical strength in some measure returned to him, we found that his mind was sadly enfeebled, his memory defective, his former acuteness and shrewd foresight wholly gone. He would never be his olden self again; he could never work for his children more: they must now take care of him.

We considered our position, and made resolves for the future bravely.

'I shall write—I shall make money by my writings,' said Harriet. 'Hitherto, I have been content with fame—but now'—

And for years, she persisted in the idea, that whenever she chose to exert herself to find a liberal and enterprising publisher, competence, if not affluence, was within her grasp. But none of my sister Harriet's works were ever published, except two or three 'light articles,' which found a home in a fashion-book, a presentation copy of which formed the author's remuneration.

However, fortunately, we needed not to hang on literature as our sole means of support: each of us had a small sum of money yearly secured to us, which in our prosperous days had been our pocket-money; now, joined together, it would at least insure us from

starvation. We wrote to Alicia, telling her that, now circumstances had so changed with us, it seemed right that we should all draw close together, and help one another. Her answer came, after some delay; she pleaded many and reasonable arguments why it was wisest and best for her to remain in her position of gorgeous dependence with the rich Mrs Cleveland. Every possible reason, in fact, she adduced and brought forward, except the most obvious and probable—her own wish, which she evidently tried to persuade herself did not exist. Poor Alicia! she was not selfish enough not to be ashamed of her selfishness.

In the infancy of our plans, arrived a letter from Ellinor Keith. She had just heard of our trouble; and she wrote, saying that her brother had resolved not to return to Byford; and that it would be a relief and comfort to them to think we had their old house. Would we rent it of them? And she named the amount of rent, which was small, as in most country-places. But then it was furnished; and she had anticipated any possible objection, by begging me to suffer it to remain so till they returned to England, and could make some arrangement about it. All she said was full of thoughtful sweetness, of considerate, sympathising affection; and in certain touches here and there, I could trace where her brother's clear head and vigorous judgment had been employed in her behalf. Also a few lines were added in his handwriting to the end of Ellinor's letter—a few lines—golden lines—words so good, of such warm, vital friendship, that my heart glowed and basked in a sense of satisfied pride, that for a moment almost transformed me. I comprehended the delicate kindness; and it was with the pleasantest feeling I had had for many a day, that I sat down to answer Ellinor's offer—to accept it. It was almost happiness to feel I could love them both again, they were so good.

And so we were settled at Byford, and the new life began. It was difficult, at first, to know—what, nevertheless, it was necessary at once to decide—the means by which we were to add to our scanty income sufficiently to enable us to support our father in some degree of the comfort he had been accustomed to. But we were especially fortunate, and a way was soon indicated; and so it came to pass that Grace and I kept a school.

It was on a very small scale at first; the widowed lord of the manor, going abroad for his health, left his two young daughters in our care; and from this introduction—it need not be said whose careful friendship first suggested it—came gradually many other pupils.

In all this change, things came easier to me than to Grace—there was so much for me to do. Activity well suited my temperament, and difficulty was a sort of mental food I found as pleasant as it was wholesome; moreover, I did not distrust myself so much as I had expected, after the first week or two. My patience failed me no more than my determination, and I felt a certain pride in discovering my power over my own nature. Passionate, impetuous, yet gloomily reticent of both passion and impulse; these were the predominant and unpromising characteristics of what was to be made into a teacher and companion of girl-children—girl-children! most sacred and beautiful of this world's denizens.

I think it was this sudden and intimate contact with child-nature that worked so salutary an effect upon my own. These two little girls of six and eight years old, were not more, doubtless, than other children, fair, and simple, and true. But it was sufficient for me that they were not less. Their presence, their innocent companionship, their talk, their laughter, and their tears, were all helps and safeguards to me against the more mutinous and turbulent portion of myself. And by and by came the greatest help of all—their love—the sweet, unthought-of, spontaneous, unreasoning love

which a child, and only a child, can give. I believe that not till I open my eyes in heaven, shall I ever again know the exquisite feeling I had when little Rosamond one day flung her arms round my neck, and looking into my eyes, before she pressed her soft face to mine, lisped out: 'I do love you—so!'

For my poor Grace, meanwhile, it was much harder, sorer work, because she had not so much doing, and had more leisure for thinking and feeling. Moreover, love came to her so simply as a thing of course: people, grown people, and little children, loved her as they loved flowers and sunshine, and all blessed, beautiful things—because they could not help it. Love came to her, not as an added gift, but as a necessary accompaniment to the mere fact of being. Rosamond and Mary had always gone to her with their caresses and glad prattle, as naturally as they might to a rose-tree or to a singing-bird; yet to her their love brought no comfort; it seemed, indeed, as if she scarcely recognised it. She would smile to them, talk to them, fold them in her arms and kiss them, and then put them away, and turn aside to her solitary musings, or the forced perusal of her book—forgetful, I could see, of everything in the wide universe, except the fact that she was most miserable.

I found it very hard to note, day by day, that she grew thinner, and paler, and weaker—that her voice altered in its tone, and became almost sharp—that her smile was no longer sweet, girlish, winning, as of old, but forced, and sometimes bitter; and gradually she grew haughty in her ways, and fretful in her temper—was often sarcastic to poor, unconscious Harriet, and to the old invalid father—alas, Grace!—even to him not so duteously patient as she should have been.

At length I remonstrated—I would tell her she was wrong—I would be heard. I waylaid her in her favourite walk at the end of the garden, and caught in mine the hand with which she tried, in her new, haughty fashion, to wave me away.

'Grace, my child, you must listen to me for a little while.'

'I shall not; I am busy. I have matters of my own to think about. Go back to your school-children, Ella. Is there not interest enough for you in them?'

'Perhaps, if other interests were not dearer. But at present they have gone into the village with my father. You would not go with him, he told me.'

'I wished to be alone. It is a strange thing,' she went on, with a bitter laugh, 'that the more humble the desire, the less chance there seems to be of attaining it. I have absolutely cut down, remorselessly crushed out, every single wish, every hope, every longing, except one—to be let alone; and you won't leave me that.'

'No, I will not leave you that,' I said sadly. I still held her hand, in spite of her restless efforts to get free. 'Oh, Grace—oh, my Little Grace!' I cried at length, in the uttermost entreaty of my heart. It touched her, I could see, by the instantaneous quiver I felt pass through her, and by the sudden swerve of her long neck. How almost painfully slender it had grown to look, now that it had lost its graceful, habitual droop!

'I can bear to know you unhappy—to see you suffer,' I went on, 'and to stand by powerless to help or to heal. But to see you altering from my innocent sister—to see you doing wrong, feeling wrongly—oh, Grace! it is too hard, too hard, and I cry out against it.'

She answered never a word.

'Everything else has its comfort; this last, sorest, bitterest grief has none. Don't crush me with it, Grace. Look up at me with the old look in your eyes; lean your head on my shoulder in the dear old way. Grace! Grace! have pity on yourself—have mercy on me!'

'How can I?' she uttered in a hard, constrained voice. 'What is it you are asking me, do you know?'

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What am I to do? What is there left for me to do? I cannot go back, and be a child or a girl again; I cannot unlearn what I have learned. Such as I am, my fate has made me. So let it be.

'So it shall not be!' I cried desperately. 'You shall conquer, and not be conquered. What you call fate, is only circumstance.'

'Only,' she repeated: 'that *only* has shaped all my life to come, until I die, and perhaps afterwards. I should be wicked, if I had opportunity,' she went on excitedly, and looking down my beseeching gaze with her glittering defiant eyes; 'but in this quiet place, I can only think my evil, and not act it.'

'Grace! what are you saying?'

'Do I frighten you?' She laughed, as if well pleased. 'I will let you see more, then, into your sister's heart, since you care to know it.'

'Are you sure you know it?'

'I think so, truly. I have had much companionship with it of late. Ella! I will call wrong, and I will face my misery as misery. At least I will be no hypocrite. I will not bow down my head, and say: "It is best—I am content." I will not wear the look of meek resignation, with hot rebellion flaming within me all the while. I dare to complain—to cry out. I am wretched, wretched, and from no fault of mine! I have been wronged of Heaven and of man! I would like to revenge myself on both.'

I silenced her quivering lips with my hand.

'Oh, hush! Under this evening sky, to say such words. Grace! if our mother hears'—

'My mother—oh, my mother!' And there the poor half-delirious child sank down, and her head fell heavily upon my lap. Still the unnatural vitality of excitement gave her strength. I tried to hold her close to me, to keep her there; but she broke away, saying bitterly:

'Why did you bring *her* name here? Let me go—oh, let me go! You cannot help me; you can only torture with your looks and your words. If I could but have died, and gone to my mother, before I felt like this! Now, it is too late. I shall never, never be fit to see her face again.'

'Grace! you will—you shall.'

'You don't know what I am: you cannot guess.'

'I can. By the most intimate right, I *know*. My poor child, you think, as I thought, as thousands of others have thought, that what you feel has never been felt before, will never be suffered again. It is so with all extremes, I suppose. I remember, when I was very happy, once, I thought the same.'

I paused an instant. The allusion to that past happiness was a perilous one; my heart leaped, and sank back with a cold dead plunge; but I caught the flitting look on my sister's face, and I breathed in courage for myself, and hope for her, and went on:

'I, too, have been very miserable; I, too, have thought that my misery was more than I could bear—that it was unjustly visited upon me; and that the wickedness it prompted within me was natural, inevitable—the human remonstrance against divine injury. Grace! I believed all this. I was as miserable as you are now; wicked feelings stirred within me as in you; I felt an alien in the world—this poor world that people call so bad. Every beautiful thing I saw or heard, struck discord upon my heart which was so estranged from all beauty and all love. I was so far from God, that I thought His voice could never reach me more. I rebelled, first, and then I despaired.'

'You despaired. You might well despair!' she cried impetuously. 'What hope is there for us, unless we grow to be in love with pain, and find in endurance that which others find in sunshine and fresh air? Ella, we may well despair.'

'Not to hope, is to blaspheme the living God. Grace! it was that which was wrong with me; it is

that which now nearly maddens you. I see it looking out of your eyes; I hear it in every tone of your voice. Grace! in this world, there is sorrow most sad—pain most keen—anguish most bitter; but misery—no creature need know misery till its Creator's face is hidden from its blinded eyes, and it dares to doubt, to deny His mercy and His love. There is no misery in the wide world but that dread, unnatural enmity. Oh, come from it—cast it off—and be again a little child at the feet of your Father!'

And I ceased, for the thick sobs would no longer be pressed back. Tears never came easily to me, as to most women, but in a very passion—a storm that exhausted even while it relieved.

For a long time, while it lasted, Grace never turned her head, never moved; but at length, at length there was a swift gesture, a sharp cry, and my little sister hung about my neck. Oh, the soft rain of tears that fell then over her pale face and long tresses of brown hair—the tender words I whispered over her—the old pet names I remembered to call her by! And then, half-frightened at the listless way in which her head drooped on her breast, and her cold arms clung round my neck, I lifted her from the ground, and fairly bore her into the house.

#### THE MOTE AND THE BEAM.

Nor a few tales have been written, and not a few grave chapters indited, on the prevailing folly of endeavouring to keep up the appearance belonging to a station to which we are not actually entitled. How many struggling fathers and mothers of England have been depicted as being irretrievably ruined by means of the very efforts they made to retain a certain position in the social scale. This scuffle for a place not our own, this striving to look better than we are, must, of course, be a great mistake. Everybody abuses it, and what everybody abuses must be wrong. The answer to this betrays, we fear, the general hollowness of society. No man would give himself the trouble to bolster himself up in a false position, unless he found his account in it. However loud the clamour may be against him, he knows practically that the feelings of the mob of moralists are all in his favour. The love of seeming, if not inherent in our nature, is at least a very early acquisition. We begin learning the lesson when we are children at school. Look into any 'Establishment for Young Ladies,' or 'Academy for Young Gentlemen,' and tell us which of its juvenile members receives the most attention. Is it the cleverest or the kindest? Undoubtedly not. These are but secondary lights in comparison with the girl who dresses the best and studies the most expensive accomplishments; or the *one* boy whose father sends a carriage and livery-servant to fetch him home at the vacation. If, then, a carriage helps to win me homage, is it not likely I shall strive to keep one? And if I help to ruin myself by means of an article of luxury too expensive for my income, are you, who accorded me a degree of respect, when seated therein, which you would have denied me if trudging on foot, free from blame?

Why did the rich attorney's only daughter and heiress pass me a few weeks since, as if unconscious of my presence, and this morning receive my homage in the most gracious manner? I am the same creature, not a whit improved, I solemnly believe, in mind or person. True; but my appearance is changed. The first time we met, my clothes were undeniably shabby; but fortune has looked kindly upon me since then, and my

walking-dress is now as unexceptionable as her own. Now, this young lady may be of little account in her own individuality, but she is a fair specimen of the society by which I am surrounded; and if society drives me—for I am not a strong-minded person—into running in ruinous debt to my tailor, I take leave to throw the blame where it is due, and I laugh to scorn the moral exclamations against the pretender.

To what boarding-school, let me ask you, would you send your daughters? If you knew some hard-working, well-educated young lady, skilful in tuition, who has, perhaps, more than one helpless relative depending for bread on her success, would you intrust your children to her care, in spite of the modest unpretending dwelling in which her labours are carried on? No such thing; you would rather place Mary Anne or Sarah Jane at Topleton Hall, where only a limited number—a pretty large one though—is taken. You would wait patiently for a vacancy, and exhibit the high-flown prospectus to your friends with no little pride; though you profess to grumble at the extravagant terms to be paid for *everything*, which, of course, your daughter is to learn. You rejoice in speaking of the morning-concerts which the lady-principal gives, in order to display the musical proficiency of the pupils of Topleton Hall; where all the young ladies, regardless of difference in complexion, are dressed in one uniform livery of book-muslin and blue streamers. You choose your school by its high-flown appearances; and you feel that it adds something to your own dignity when you speak of Anna Maria's pianoforte solo, which gained such applause at the last concert at Topleton; though it is likely enough you have found a little pinching necessary in the domestic department, to enable you to meet the heavy educational expenses you have entailed on yourself. You have this consolation, however, that Mrs Jones and Mrs Smith will probably judge the total amount of your income by that item in your expenditure; and these moralists, even if they fail to do so, will pay deference to the assumption they condemn.

What tradesman do you patronise? There is young Brown, the son of your old friend, who has just taken to himself a wife, and is as worthy, steady, and honest a fellow as you could meet in a long summer's day. Do you buy your tea and sugar at his small place of business, and thereby give your old friend's son such a lift as may be in your power at his starting in life? Not at all. You send your orders to the Grand Chinese and Universal Anti-adulteration Tea-company's Retail Dépôt, which occupies half a street, and is a curiosity of plate-glass and gilding. If you went to Brown's, the chances are strong that his young wife would help to pack up your parcels, for she is not yet above helping in the shop, and that he himself would carry them home in the evening; while the company have a tribe of shopmen and porters for these purposes, and a painted and polished vehicle drawn by a high-stepping horse. Brown, however, knows his articles are as good as theirs, and perhaps better, and hopes he may be able to go on for a time in the old shop without alteration. But it won't do. The moralists flock to the Company, and the young man in desperation begins to dash, flinging out a grand new front and hiring shopmen to bring business, not to administer it. What his success may be, we cannot tell. If he succeeds in rivalling the Company,

he takes away enough of their business, not to enrich himself, for that is impossible with his new expenses, but to keep both poor in the midst of all their splendour; if otherwise, you may soon read his fate in the small print of the newspapers, headed 'Bankrupts,' and hear the moralists sighing over it—So much for pretension!

Then look at the learned professions—physic, for instance. Young White is as clever and steady a young man as ever breathed; he has worked early and late, studied till his eyes grew dim, and watched night and day in order to become thoroughly up both in the theoretical and practical parts of his profession. In giving him the means of doing so much, his friends have done all in their power; and now, having got thus far, he must shift for himself. Silverspoon and he passed the Royal College of Surgeons at the same time; but Silverspoon had been twice plucked, and only got through at the third trial by dint of infinite coaching. White lives in lodgings, and visits his few patients on foot. Silverspoon has quite an extensive establishment, and dashes about in the lightest of surgeon's gigs, with the smartest of tigers by his side, and the bright-plated harness with which his glossy horse is caparisoned sparkling in the sunshine. At first, he drove a great many miles to see nobody, and was exceedingly persevering in his attentions to that eccentric gentleman, who has so much to answer for: but it was not for long. We are all ready enough to add our mite of business when a man has, or seems to have, already plenty to do; and Silverspoon is now quite a fashionable doctor. He feels a half-pitying contempt for White, who, poor fellow, knows so much, but makes no use of his knowledge, which does not enable him to see that unless he appears to have already more practice than he can attend to, he will get no employment at all. This poor young man will grow into a poor old man; and the moralists will say: 'A respectable practitioner that, very,' and pass by on the other side.

It would be easy to multiply illustrations of the kind—the difficulty would be to find a single exception in the whole life of society. We have instanced business and professional matters, but in our everyday social intercourse the same feeling and the same action prevail, and the same strain of sneering or indignant morality is indulged in. It is always the individual who is to blame, the many, never: we call upon the former, either in ridicule or reproach, to take the mote from his eye—forgetting the beam in our own. This is perhaps a characteristic of the world we live in, but it is more especially so of the present time. We are all reformers; we all throw ourselves upon some particular folly or evil, and combat it à l'outrance: but we all press *outwards*, regarding ourselves as exceptions to the rule of mankind. We confess we are not hearty—that is the writer as an individual—in the cause of what is called Total Abstinence, and the reason is that it goes to a wild extreme which almost necessitates a reaction; but the general principle it adopts of *self-reform* is admirable, and we heartily wish it were applied to more social evils than one. The abstainer at least does not encourage the practice he condemns, and does not praise the merit he sees, passing by himself on the other side.

After all, is pretension quite an unmixed evil? Is it not well for people that they strain after something a little better than what lies easily within their reach? Is not this ambition part of that system of activity on which the whole social world is constituted? Is it not connected with that regard to decency which to lack is to lack nearly all solid virtue? In these queries

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there is matter for much further discussion; but it does not exactly belong to our present theme, and we therefore leave it to the consideration of our readers.

### THERE'S A SNAKE IN THE GRASS!

We are now entering upon the time of the year for solitary walks—*solus cum sola*; for picnics on the grass, when the denizens of murky towns forsake their vulgar haunts for nature's drawing-room; and for family-parties, in which mamma and papa become suddenly sensible of the bird-like music of their children's voices sounding among the trees. The earth invites us to what old Herbert, in a fine burst of poetry, calls her bridal with the sky; dressed in her fairest and brightest, and in her coronal of virgin flowers, she takes the winds of June with beauty; and spreads a carpet for her guests a thousand times richer and softer than any wonder of the loom, and bestrewn with real buds and wreaths instead of mock ones. Can there be any drawback on the happiness of such a scene? There is—there's a snake in the grass.

And two—three—half-a-dozen—a score—and many more snakes; and they are all the more deadly from wearing the appearance of innocent flowers. The most beautiful, the most poetical of the natural flowers are usually the most poisonous. When you hear the tuneful praises of the small celandine, the white anemone, the golden butter-cup, the graceful narcissus, the fragrant lily, the wild hyacinth or harebell—look if you think fit, but taste not if you would live. A little book is now before us, containing a brief popular description of the British poisonous plants, the details of which are quite appalling; and the victims, one is surprised to find, are frequently adults as well as children.\* Mr Johnson is entitled to the thanks of the whole community, but more especially of parents; and the volume fortunately is generally accessible in point of size, and generally intelligible from the absence of all but the absolutely necessary scientific terms. The general reader will easily learn the names of the parts composing a flower—more easily, as our author remarks, than the figures of a quadrille—and he will then be in smooth water.

'A flower, in its most perfect form, consists of four or five series of parts. Externally, the calyx or flower-cup, usually of a green hue, as the little leaves at the back of a rose—or the cup that contains the blossom of a primrose, the pieces composing it are called *sepals*. Within the calyx is the *corolla* or blossom, generally the coloured and most conspicuous portion of the flower, the pieces forming which are called *petals*. Within the corolla are the *stamens*, threads, bearing coloured tips called *anthers*; the stamens vary in number from one to many, and they are either free, or united to the calyx, corolla, or some other part. In the centre of the flower is the *pistil* or *pistils*, the lower part of which is the *ovary*, becoming afterwards the fruit or seed-vessel. Upon the arrangement, numbers, and other circumstances attaching to these organs, the distinctive characters of plants and their associations are chiefly constructed. The calyx and corolla are sometimes wanting, the flower consisting of stamens and pistils only, and occasionally these two latter occur apart from each other or in separate flowers, which flowers are then said to be *unisexual*. Although varying in appearance in different plants, a very little practice enables a person to recognise the parts of a flower under all the changes to which they are liable. In a few instances, another series of parts is found in a flower, occupying a place between the corolla and the stamens, and partaking of the character

of one or other of those organs: such is the cup in the middle of the flower of a narcissus—such are the rays in a passion-flower.'

The common monkshood, with which children are so much amused as they move the cowl up and down, is one of the most deadly of those snakes in the grass.

'Every part of this plant is a powerful poison, and its action is often too rapid to admit of the effectual administration of remedies. The young leaves have been mistaken for parsley, the root on several occasions for horse-radish: the flavour of them both is totally unlike that of the vegetables for which they have been substituted; but this circumstance is either not attended to at the time, or regarded as too trivial to excite more than a passing remark. The root of the monkshood has an earthy smell, and is bitter to the taste, without any very remarkable pungency at first, but soon produces a slight tingling and a burning sensation, attended with a kind of numbness and contraction of the skin of the tongue and roof of the mouth: the pricking or tingling soon extends over the body, and a feeling of constriction about the throat, occasionally amounting almost to strangling, induces the patient to frequently grasp it with the hand. The symptoms may vary according to age, constitution, and other circumstances, but headache, confused vision, restlessness, convulsive clenching of the hands and jaw, vomiting and diarrhoea, attended with severe pain in the abdomen, are the most prominent and ordinary. The time of death varies from one to eight hours after the poison has been swallowed, and hopes may be entertained of the patient's recovery if the fatal termination does not ensue within that period.'

The deadly nightshade is a name terrifying enough to serve as a warning; but the account of it is worth quoting.

'Its fatal effect seems to have been long known, for there is strong reason for believing this to have been the poisonous plant which occasioned such disastrous consequences to the Roman troops under Mark Antony, in their retreat from the Parthians. Plutarch, in relating this misadventure, says: "Those who sought for herbs obtained few that they were accustomed to eat, and in tasting unknown plants they found one that caused insanity and death. He that had eaten thereof immediately lost all memory and knowledge, but at the same time would busy himself in turning and moving every stone he met with, as if he were engaged in some very important pursuit. The camp was filled with unhappy men, bending to the ground, and digging up and removing stones, till at last they were carried off by a bilious vomiting, when wine, the only remedy, was not at hand." The Scotch, under Macbeth, are said to have mingled the juice of belladonna with the bread which they supplied to the army of Sweno the Dane during a truce, and by eating which the invaders became stupefied, and were murdered at leisure while in that state by their treacherous entertainers. No less than 150 soldiers suffered from its effects near Dresden some time back.'

A kindred plant, the henbane, is sometimes mistaken for parsnips.

'A still more remarkable instance of such an error is recorded by Dr Houlton, in which the roots were eaten by the inmates of a monastery for supper, probably in place of the same esculent vegetable. All who had partaken of them were more or less affected during the night and following day. With some, the actions induced were rather ludicrous. One monk got up at midnight and tolled the bell for matins, while of those who obeyed the summons, some could not read, others repeated what was not in their breviaries, and many were seized with the strangest hallucinations.'

On turning to the little book itself, which we hope many of our readers will do, they will find a majority

\* *British Poisonous Plants*. By Charles Johnson, botanical lecturer at Guy's Hospital. With twenty-eight coloured Plates, transferred from *English Botany*. London: J. E. Sowerby. 1856.



of those wild-flowers that have been celebrated by the poets taking high rank among the snakes; and they will be able to warn their children against a tribe of glossy luscious-looking berries whose annual victims we fear are numerous. In the meantime, having mentioned the subject at all, it will be proper to give here Mr Johnson's directions for treatment in the absence of professional aid.

'It is an unfortunate circumstance that, in most accidental instances of vegetable poisoning, the quantity taken into the stomach is considerable, and this especially where the article has been substituted for food or its ordinary accompaniments; and that it is, at the same time, less open to the administration of antidotes than most mineral substances, whose dangerous qualities may often be neutralised, or even altogether removed by chemical means. Under all circumstances, an emetic should be given, where the patient is capable of swallowing, or vomiting excited by tickling the inside of the throat or back of the mouth with a feather—where no other emetic is at hand, two or three tea-spoonfuls of mixed mustard, stirred in half a pint of warm water, will generally answer the purpose. When the poisonous matter itself occasions vomiting, it should be encouraged to the utmost by frequent draughts of warm water, or, as soon as it can be prepared, of thin gruel or barley-water; and when the sickness ceases, after the discharge of the poison by this means, a cup or two of strong coffee or of black tea will be beneficial. Where the poison is of the narcotic class, the stupefaction and tendency to sleep which it occasions should be checked by hurrying the patients about, pouring cold water upon the head, and using every means of excitement possible; as otherwise the vomiting necessary to its removal may not be induced, in consequence of the insensibility of the stomach.

When some time has elapsed after swallowing the poison, before suspicion arises, and pain and other symptoms indicate that it has reached the bowels, injections of warm water, soap and water, or thin gruel with a little salt, may be employed safely, and especially when vomiting has not occurred to the desired extent, and a difficulty of swallowing—a frequent effect of narcotic-irritant poisoning—prevents the repetition of the means of inducing it. The incapability of swallowing is generally, however, rather spasmodic than continuous, and advantage must be taken of the intervals during which the convulsive action is suspended to administer the emetic.'

We take the opportunity of mentioning that the same author has recently brought out an elegant volume on the British ferns, which will be of great interest to botanists and amateurs, although of too exclusively scientific a character for notice in these pages.\*

#### A RIDE IN HER MAJESTY'S MAIL-GIG.

To travel by a four-horse mail-coach from the west of England to London, and in due time back again from London to the west of England, were events to which, in my youthful days, I looked forward with the most pleasurable anxiety. To be seated at the top of such a carriage, with the royal arms painted on either panel, with a guard behind and a driver before clothed in their regal livery—to behold four spanking, spirited horses dashing forward through mud, mire, or dust, and at every stoppage meeting with the most ready assistance for the promotion of our onward journey, was to feel one's self an exalted and a superior being.

Those days, alas! are for ever gone; four-horse

mail-coaches have passed away to that bourn from which no four-horse mail-coaches return. But if four-horse mail-coaches have succumbed to the iron locomotive, they may in some respects be said to live again in their numerous progeny—the mail-gigs. Mail-gigs yet flourish; and long may they do so, carrying joy and gladness to every little village and hamlet in the kingdom, treading paths and winding roads that no four-horse mail-coach would ever condescend to traverse, or railway-train vouchsafe to visit. Hurrah, then, for the mail-gig! the dashing, splashing, noisy, sometimes crazy, mail-gig; with its guard and driver—both in one—perched so jauntily up in his little seat, and its Rosinante and Pegasus—also both in one—dashing like mad over its ten miles an hour including stoppages. Give me the mail-gig for a twenty-five miles of night-journey through a quiet country, with a road entirely to one's self, and only here and there a village to call to one's recollection the fact that we still journey through the scenes of human life! Give me the mail-gig, with a snug nine inches of seat beside a driver who not only knows every inch of the road, but is redolent of the incidents of mail-gig journeyism and of mail-gigiana, and I desire no greater treat in life!

But softly! I think I see Her Majesty's postmaster-general pricking up his official ears, and grumbling forth: 'Ha! ha! How's this? Travelling by the mail-gig! I'll cancel the driver's contract, and fine him into the bargain.' Good reader, keep it quiet: there is a theory promulgated at head-quarters that mail-gigs carry no passengers, and that any contractor who, in addition to carrying the mails, should carry males or females of another sort, will surely have the bags taken from him, and have the sack instead. I say that this is a *theory* merely, because in *practice*—but no matter, judge for yourself.

Once upon a time, business found me late in the evening—a dark November evening—in the little city of Springs, down in the west. Now, the city of Springs, as many may know, is situated some twenty-four miles from the city of Pumps. Upon the peace and quietness of the former, no presuming railway had as yet ventured to intrude; and if, therefore, upon any sudden emergency there should exist a necessity for getting from thence to the aforesaid city of Pumps, post-horses and a post-chaise are still the legitimate means of transit. Thus then, I repeat, once upon a time being so located, news arrived which induced me to think it desirable that early next day I should present myself in London. By getting to the city of Pumps, I could easily run up by the rail; but to get there with the assistance of post, I should have incurred an expense of some four pounds. Whilst pondering the matter in my mind, a friendly suggestion was made to me by the boots, that as he had a brother-in-law who drove the mail-gig between these two places, who would be shortly starting, I could, for a small consideration, get a lift, and so get to Pumps in time for the night-mail to London. The idea being exactly in accordance with my own feelings, I agreed to be taken up outside the town in half an hour.

At the time appointed, I found myself on the turnpike-road, patiently waiting to be overtaken by my royal conveyance. I had not to wait long, for exactly as the cathedral clock struck nine, I heard the blast of the driver's horn as he drove through the archway of the cathedral green.

'Good-night, sir. Jump up alongside here. Good time, but none to spare. Dark night, but it won't rain.'

Before he had concluded these few sentences, I was at his side. Now, eighteen inches of seat, divided by two, give just nine inches to each; but I have no hesitation in saying that, whether it arose from a feeling of politeness or not, I certainly was indulged with at least twelve of the aforesaid eighteen inches, nor would

\* *The Ferns of Great Britain*: illustrated by John E. Sowerby. The Descriptions, Synonyms, &c., by Charles Johnson, Esq. London: J. E. Sowerby, 1855.

any persuasion of mine induce my companion to take his proper share; and how he contrived to sit and drive, has always to me been a perfect mystery.

Now, travelling over the road from the city of Springs to the city of Pumps was not quite like a perpetual going up one side of a house and down the other, but it put one very much in mind of it, the way consisting of about twenty miles of almost perpendicular hill, relieved by some five miles of rather easier gradients. But what were hills to our Pegasus! Absolutely nothing. On we went, indifferent alike to ups and downs; the journey must be done in the time allotted; and if walking and trotting would not do it, why, cantering must.

'Why, this is a tremendous pace!' quoth I, after a perfect flight of a mile or so down a road which a novice might fairly have imagined was the high road to a nameless place.

'Rather fast,' he returned; 'but if I am to get over twenty-five miles in two hours and a half, and take the stoppages out of it, why, there it is! Half-past eleven to the minute is my time at Pumps; and, wet or dry, frost or snow, it must be done.'

'What!' I exclaimed—'that pace at all seasons?'

'Just so,' he replied. 'That's the contract; and you may as well sing psalms to a dead horse as try to alter it. The office will have it, and contractors will be found to do it.'

'But accidents,' said I—'how about accidents? They must be constantly occurring.'

'And so they are,' he continued—'horses killed, drivers maimed, and gigs smashed.—May I trouble you, sir, just to get out and walk to the other side of the village. This is Wooden Mallet. I have to stop at the office for a few minutes; and if you take that path, you will get to the other side of the village by a short-cut, and I will pick you up by the time you get there.'

With this he drew up, and I alighted; and following his directions, soon found myself on the further side of Wooden Mallet, in moody speculation as to whether or not my night's experience of the mail-gig was to be signalled by any of the unpleasant incidents to which my companion had lately referred. A few minutes, and I was again seated as before.

'A light mail to-night, sir—always so of a Monday. Sometimes very heavy—often a ton-weight.'

'What!' I observed—'a ton-weight of letters from Springs?'

'Not from Springs alone,' said he, 'but from thirty miles round. Heavy bankers' books, lawyers' deeds, besides heaps of newspapers. See the gig with the down-mail of a Saturday night—half the size of a haystack—bags strapped on all round!'

'Indeed!' I exclaimed; 'and with only yourself—and you occupied in driving—to protect it all!'

'Nothing more,' said he, 'except this brace of pistols. But, Lord bless you, sir! nobody now-a-days thinks of attacking the mail—certain to be detected. There's plenty of letter-stealing, to be sure, in its way; but then it's of another sort. No one can calculate the sight of money I sometimes bring down. Nine months ago, when there was a run upon the banks, I brought down, in one journey, fifty thousand pounds, all in sovereigns, besides forty thousand in Bank of England notes; and all along the road it was pretty well known that I was bringing the needful to stop the run. Why, if I had the national debt in the bags, it would be just as safe as at present, and there's precious little chance of that ever being lost.'

Heartily concurring in my friend's last remark, I resigned myself to my own silent contemplations until we reached the inn where we changed our horse. A moment's friendly chat with the landlady over, and a glass of ale despatched, we resumed our journey.

'You were speaking of accidents,' I remarked, when

we had proceeded at a flying pace down a mile of almost perpendicular hill—'has it been your fate to meet with any?'

'A few,' he replied. 'Broke my leg and three ribs turning that corner yonder; came against a coal-cart in the middle of the road, killed the horse on the spot, was laid up for six months. Three months back, ran over a donkey asleep, broke my collar-bone and put out my right shoulder. Have been spilt ten times in four years, but not often very much hurt; for, as I always expect a spill, I prepare for it accordingly. Impossible to go the pace over such a road and not be often spilt.'

'But,' I observed, feeling somewhat uneasy at these reminiscences, 'do you not fear a fatal termination from one of these accidents?'

'I have not much fear about it: I take the accident as it comes,' said he. 'A spill every now and then is down upon the cards, and it's no use being afraid. We kill two horses to breaking a leg once. Last Monday week, I got an awkward throw. We were rattling down two-mile hill, and were just crossing the bridge at the bottom, when the mare shies at something: bang we come against the milestone; over I go into the river below, with no other injury than a few scratches; the mare, however, was killed dead upon the spot. There was twenty pound gone slap. I could have afforded to have broken my arm for half the money. Poor Bill Whippey, however, who was driving for me a while ago, met with a very unlucky chance. Bill, who kept the "Lamb and Lion" hard by, used to take a turn now and then in a friendly way, and prided himself upon his driving. Well, Bill would dash on at a spanking pace, blowing his horn all the while for a mile or more before he came to his own door, and then he would suddenly pull up. Poor Bill did this once too often. It was a dark night; and when he was at full speed, and within twenty yards of his door, bang came the gig against the wheel of a wagon; down went the horse, up in the air went poor Bill; and presently he was discovered lying across the top of his own sign-post, with no more life in him than a sack of oats.'

After this fashion we proceeded on our way, my companion recounting many adventures which, whilst they interested my curiosity, in no way assured me of the safety of this mode of travelling. He had just concluded an anecdote of a curious mischance, in which he was the hero, when, suddenly checking his horse, he exclaimed: 'Hollo! what's that?' The occasion of this was a peculiar shock to the gig, accompanied by a remarkable sound, or rather succession of sounds receding from us.

'Why, I'll be hanged,' said my companion, 'if the tire of the off-wheel isn't gone.'

And, true enough, it was so. The iron band of the wheel was reeling down the road behind us some dozen yards away.

'Well,' observed the driver, 'this is a precious mess. How are we to get on now? The wheel itself will be all to pieces presently. However, there's no help for it: we must get on a mile further to the Blue Post Inn, and there get another trap. We'll just push the tire out of the way, and perhaps the wheel will hold together for a few minutes.'

Having recovered the tire, and thrown it over the hedge, we again seated ourselves in the gig, momentarily expecting premonitory symptoms of a break-down. However, without further accident, we presently arrived at the Blue Post.

A blast from the horn soon brought the ostler to our side.

'Sam,' said my companion, 'I want your master's trap. I've had a break-down. The tire of the off-wheel is gone, and I must leave the gig here and go on with something else.'

'Master's just gone to bed,' said Sam; 'but I'll fetch him down in a minute.'

Presently the landlord himself appeared in full bedroom costume; whereupon my companion again stated his case, adding that he must get the bags to Pumps without a moment's loss of time.

'Can't have the trap to-night,' said the landlord.

'Can't? But I must. It's on the Queen's service.'

'Don't care whose service,' returned the landlord. 'I shan't let the trap go out to-night.'

'Now, no nonsense, Brown,' said my companion. 'The mail must be carried on; and,' he continued, assuming a dignity and an importance called forth by the occasion, 'I demand the use of your trap in the Queen's name!'

'Queen's name or no Queen's name, you don't have my trap to-night,' said the landlord.

'Don't be a fool, Brown. If I choose, I can break open the coach-house and take it. The Queen's service before anything: so out with the trap.'

'What I've said, I've said,' replied Mr Brown, with obvious determination in his manner; 'and you don't have my trap to knock to pieces to-night.'

'Very well, Brown,' continued my companion, 'I have demanded your trap in the Queen's name on the Queen's service, and you refuse. You will hear of this again to your cost. Now, sir,' addressing me, 'we must push on as well as we can. Jump up.'

I was on the point of suggesting that, as I felt no overruling interest in the immediate despatch of the mail, but certainly did in the safety of my neck, I would decline the further pursuit of my journey that night, and would instead thereof partake of such accommodation as the Blue Post would afford. I was restrained, however, in my purpose by the double motive of not wishing to appear craven in the eyes of my companion, or to promote the advantage of the unaccommodating landlord. So I responded to the invitation, and was again seated in the damaged conveyance.

'We must get to Dumberton as well as we can; it's only two miles and a half further on; and there I know I can borrow Bill Keeling's tilted cart. Hold on, sir, by the splash-board. If the wheel comes to pieces, I shall go out first, and you will have an easy fall.'

'But,' I ventured to remark, 'had we not better get out ourselves, and walk the horse?'

'Not at all,' said he. 'I'll keep to my time if I can—always make that a rule. Don't be alarmed, sir. If the wheel holds together, it's all right; and if it don't—why, perhaps it won't much matter.'

Though not perfectly agreeing with this reasoning, I nevertheless acquiesced in it and held my peace, keeping my senses upon the stretch for the first indication of the coming smash which, I need hardly observe, I momentarily expected. On we went, however, at our old pace, flying down the mile and a half of hill which found Dumberton at its foot with lightning speed, breathing with one and the same breath anathemas on the wheelwright for his carelessness in fixing on the tire, and blessings for his skill in putting the wheel together.

'Here, then, we are, sir,' said my companion with obvious exultation, 'safe at Dumberton. Hollo, Bill, there! come out.'

Bill Keeling was soon upon the spot, and no sooner heard our case than he set about supplying our want. To bring out his tilted cart, to put Pegasus into it, and transfer the mail-bags, was the work of an instant.

'Thank 'ee, Bill; good-night. Now, sir, we are all right. It's only four miles to Pumps, and I'll bet ten to one I'm not ten minutes after my time.'

On we dashed at a pace at which no tilted cart ever travelled before. On and on we rushed, striking with awe and astonishment all whom we passed as we

neared the city. At last we fairly entered the town. Over the stones we rattled.

'There's the office, sir. May I trouble you to get down here?'

'By all means, my friend; and thank you for your drive and company. Be good enough to accept this.'

'Many thanks, sir. We are only four minutes and a half behind time. Good-night, sir.'

'Good-night,' I returned; and abandoning all intention of proceeding on my journey to London that night, I turned into the first inn I could find, and in the arms of Morpheus soon forgot the perils I had escaped in my first journey in Her Majesty's Mail-gig.

### THE SALAD-MAKER.

JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU in his *Emile* insists that every child should be taught a handicraft, in order that, on reaching man's estate, he may have some refuge in the hour of need, and be able to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. And in this age of social changes and political revolutions, is there a single merchant, nobleman, or even prince, who can consider himself beyond the vicissitudes of fortune? There are but too many proofs of the contrary. During the last sixty years, the hospitable shores of England have received men who once occupied the highest positions, and were afterwards reduced almost to starvation. If these ministers, statesmen, landowners, officers, authors, professors—if these functionaries, whether of monarchies or republics, had, besides their literary accomplishments, known a profession, so many of them would not have spent the days of exile in idleness and solitude—so many would not have lost their moral courage, and with it the esteem of the world. Man is destined, by God and nature, to work; his destiny, and consequently his value, is lost by inactivity.

Would the late King Louis-Philippe have been able to obtain the high renown which his noble conduct won for him during his protracted exile—would he have been able to work as a teacher and a mathematician, if Madame de Genlis had not given him the manly education recommended by the philosopher of Geneva? Indeed, that prince shamed many a nobleman, many a fashionable youth, nay, many a stern republican, who made appeals to foreign support rather than earn their bread by their own exertions. When Peter the Great, after having constructed a boat himself, said to his beloved Catherine: 'Behold! if I were not a czar, I could have kept thee as a carpenter,' he was greater than even on the day of Pultowa.

How necessary it is that other things should be taught in life besides literature and book-learning, has been superabundantly proved in our own time by the scenes in the Australian gold-fields and the disasters in the Crimea. 'Knowledge is power,' has become a proverbial expression in England; and the Germans pretend that labour has a golden base. It is not necessary that this knowledge and this work be of an intrinsically important character: the smallest and most trifling talent may turn out to be of value. In order to prove this, we will relate the following authentic anecdote of what happened, sixty years ago, in England, to an exiled French noble.

Certainly the French nobility were never conspicuous in history for their morality or soundness of judgment. Their frivolity is known to a proverb, and their ridiculous presumption contributed more, perhaps, than anything else, to the blood-stained French Revolution. The *émigrés* whom the Reign of Terror scattered over the whole of Europe, did not do much towards redeeming the character of their order. But there were also among them many worthy individuals, who desired a position better than that of a fashionable beggar, and of those, one of the most distinguished was M. d'Albignac.



He had lost his all, fortune and family, in the political deluge—and saved nothing but his rather handsome person. His circumstances were therefore very distressing, and he lived in London on a trifling pension allowed him by the English government.

One day, D'Albignac was dining in one of the principal taverns of the west end. He had always retained a taste for fashionable eating-houses, although his scanty means allowed him but a single dish. Nevertheless, he was very well satisfied with his fare, and, although still young himself, did not envy the lot of five or six youths who were dining near him in a much more luxurious manner. When golden sherry and sparkling champagne had raised their spirits, the young gentlemen grew a little impertinent, and at last one of them addressed the Frenchman:

'Sir,' said he, 'we have always heard that your countrymen are famous for making both philosophical systems and salads. We should be happy to try at least one of these much-boasted accomplishments, and therefore politely request you to have the goodness to prepare a salad for us.'

D'Albignac hesitated for a moment, and was on the point of resenting what he considered an offence; but his good-humour prevailed, and he resolved, as he was not well versed in metaphysical discussions, to save his country's honour by making a capital salad. He asked, therefore, for vinegar, oil, salt, pepper, and mustard, and prepared the favourite dish of French gastronomes in such a way that even the young Englishmen declared themselves highly satisfied. They were much pleased with the foreigner's condescension, and had a long conversation with him, at the end of which they asked for his address.

The lively youths, some of whom belonged to the class of nobility, spoke in the highest circles of their adventure, and suddenly, a week or two afterwards, D'Albignac received a note inviting him to come to one of the best houses in Grosvenor Square, to make a salad. He was at first greatly incensed, and felt much humiliated; but he reflected that labour in any shape is more dignified than receiving alms, even from a government, and resolved to make good use of the channel fortune had opened to him. Without being a philosopher, he understood the true philosophy of honour, which demands that every man should support himself by his own exertions; and as he knew no profession, he determined to make salads. He succeeded beyond his hopes. The dish he prepared in Grosvenor Square was paid with a five-pound note, and his reputation soon spread in high society. He was called from one house to another, and known under the name of 'The Fashionable Salad-maker.' He was soon obliged, in order to satisfy all his elegant customers, to take a carriage and to keep a servant, who followed him with a mahogany-box, containing all the requisites for a good salad. We may add, that the Gascon genius of D'Albignac made some extraordinary inventions in the way of his singular calling, and that no cook on the continent could have surpassed him in the preparation of delicious endive, savoury lettuce, or stimulating water-cresses.

D'Albignac did not find that he dishonoured his crest by becoming a salad-maker, after having been in former days a marquis; and when the Bourbons returned to France, he also went back to his native country, and was greatly honoured by all sensible men. He had lived in an economical way, and, although he had assisted many friends who were not so industrious or so fortunate, he had saved L.5000 when he crossed the Channel. Some proud dowagers of the Faubourg St Germain looked disdainfully at the 'noble cook,' as they used to call him; but he answered that he at least owed nothing to anybody—and the saying was generally applauded.

And now, if a man, besides his professional calling,

knows how to cook a frugal dinner, to mend shoes or clothes, or to use the tools of the carpenter or other mechanic, he may one day find it, although not in the same way, of as much use as salad-making was to our friend D'Albignac.

#### 'PERSONS ENTERING THESE GROUNDS.'

ONE of the drawbacks of a highly cultivated condition of the country, is a tendency to shut up grounds from that freedom of access and passage which was permitted in a ruder age. It has been seen in our country in many noted instances; and such is the present disposition of great land-proprietors to enclose, fence, and forbid, that we verily fear it will ere long be found in some districts that there is nothing but hard and dusty roads left open to the landless public. We have heard that the Killarney lakes have of late years been so taken possession of by proprietors, that many of the finest points of view can only be got at by permission. (We hope Macgillicuddy has not shut up his Reeks yet; we trust the Gap of Dunlow is still a gap.) Even the immeasurable wilds of the Scottish Highlands have been, in some parts, forbidden to the foot of strangers. It disturbs the deer, and the deer bring a second rent superior to that got for sheep and cattle. How many a river-side, where careless youth and contemplative age might once freely stray, is now secluded within 'policies'! How many an interesting ruin, once open to every chance-visitor, is now under lock and key! It is very lamentable to think of.

On the top of a cliff on the coast of Berwickshire, a Northumbrian princess of pious inclinations, some thousand years ago, erected a small church and nunnery, within whose walls she closed her own ascetic life. The establishment lasted many centuries, and attained some historic distinction. For centuries past it has been extinct. One can now only trace a few green mounds which once were walls, and with some difficulty distinguish one special enclosure which had been a burial-ground. There is little of the work of man to see on St Abb's Head; but the spot is fitted to awaken pensive sentiment, and lead the mind into not unprofitable reflections, and the view of the sea from the cliff is sublime. The people of the neighbouring village love to go there, on solitary walks or in holiday-making parties; and they have always been at freedom to do so till lately, when the landlord has shut up the ground, to prevent the farmer's cattle from being disturbed! Strange to say, Mr Home Drummond, the landlord in question, is one of the vice-presidents of the Antiquarian Society. For a gentleman of the tastes which this fact argues, to debar the public from seeing the remains of St Abb's church and nunnery, is surely a sad inconsistency.

We do not profess to ignore the economic considerations which lead to doings of this kind; but we think they ought to be entertained with great reservation. Even where the act proceeds upon an undoubted right—which we cannot believe to be true of the present case—we would have a landlord who wishes well to his country and himself, to pause and reflect what must be the ultimate effect of this shutting out of the less fortunate part of mankind from all those pleasant natural scenes which he has so abundantly at command. Will it not, for certain, introduce a bitterness into the minds of the people—make them less agreeable neighbours, more dangerous fellow-citizens? Will it not inevitably lead them to reconsider the grounds of property, that fearful question for all who have any? Property, they know, is a creature of the law, intended for the general good in the long-run, however specially beneficial to individuals in the first place. Now, while it works for the general good, it will be respected; but what if men, finding it denies them the simplest natural privileges, including that of walking over the surface

of their own earth, begin to think that property is not for the general good! Then, we suspect, will be a time for the great holders of soil to regret that, for the sake of cattle and deer, they told their fellow-creatures to sit at home or walk on the highways.

#### THE NEW STEAM-FARMER.

I devoted two days to the examination of the operation of *Boydell's Traction Steam-engine* as a locomotive and tractive power, and have come to the conclusion that it is 'a great success.' This success is owing to the endless and wide railway attached to the circumference of the wheels, which gives a fulcrum for the lever, and a bearing sufficiently wide to carry a great weight on soft ground, without imbedding in the soil. Hence the avoidance of friction and clogging. We might illustrate this by a sportsman on the mud cozes, whose feet would sink in, and thus render his power unavailable; but by attaching to his feet wide pieces of board, the pressure is diminished to a bearing condition. Thus, in the case of Mr Boydell's machine, although it weighed nine tons, its impress was scarcely perceptible, where a horse's foot left a deep indentation. The engine walked from Camden-town to Acton, taking in tow its four-wheeled wagon, with coals, and four heavy iron ploughs, and water enough for four hours' work. When on the soft turnip-field—after a night's rain—it drew after it ploughs, scarifier, &c., with perfect ease, and then walked home again to Camden-town. It can ascend an acclivity of one in three, which is nearly walking up stairs, our stairs being one in two. It can back, advance, or stop instantaneously, the pinion being shifted from the cogs of the driving-wheel; and the power thus suddenly released is carried off by a separate fly-wheel, which may be used for driving thrashing-machines, mill-stones, or other purposes. In fact, instead of a farmer sending for and sending back a six horse-power engine and thrashing-machine, requiring in each trip four horses, this machine will move itself anywhere—draw the corn to market, bring home manure, and do the cultivation and work of the farm. The machine can turn as easily as a common wagon, and does not mind a deep furrow or a side-hill.—*Abridged from a Letter from Mr Mechi, of Tiptree Hall, in the Journal of the Society of Arts.*

#### SCIENCE APPLIED TO GENTLEMEN'S DRESS.

That there is something wanting in the ordinary rules of measuring is practically admitted by the tailors themselves, who are under the necessity of trying upon their customers the skeleton of the coat—when it is advanced so far as the skeleton—before venturing to complete it. The desideratum, however, seems to be now supplied by an ingenious gentleman, who has invented a system of measuring which relieves the tailor from all anxiety, by furnishing him with a pattern which, in order to insure a perfect fit, requires nothing more than to be accurately copied in cloth. This he does by strapping and lacing to the body of the patient a universal skeleton of leather, the different pieces of which are not joined; while he places on a table before him a full-sized diagram of the same drawn upon paper. The discrepancies between the living body and the skeleton are of course seen at a glance, and they are easily noted upon the diagram by means of supplementary lines: the diagram thus becoming an unfailing pattern of the coat. The trade, we hear, are unfavourable to this invention; but if so, their hostility must proceed from mistake. It does not abrogate the office of foreman, or cutter, but merely enables that artist to supply himself, by the aid of a quick and accurate eye, with a true pattern instead of a mere attempt at one. It is true, this method requires a few minutes more than the usual plan; but, independently of the accuracy of detail it obtains, it effects a saving of time as well as trouble in the end to both parties, by doing away with the necessity for a second interview. The inventor has turned his attention to all the other parts of the dress as well as the coat and trousers, with equal success. The strange sack, for instance, we are accustomed to wear for a shirt, is with him an artistic garment, fitting as closely as is

necessary to the body, yet easily slipped on, and requiring no fastening either at the neck or wrist. But perhaps the greatest of his triumphs is the gaiter. With the assistance of his model, you may place a bit of cloth of any kind flat upon a table, and with a few movements of your scissors you will have at once a beautifully fitting gaiter, wanting only the strap and buttons to be ready for wearing. The address of the inventor, whose name is Stewart, is 72 Northumberland Street, Edinburgh, and 85 Regent Street, London.

#### GOOD-BYE.

AND so, thou leav'st me now  
With an uncertain sorrow in thy tone,  
And with, perchance, a somewhat troubled brow,  
Thou hast gone by and left me here alone.  
Ah! well, I shall not grieve, or weep, or sigh  
To say—Good-bye!

Ah! fickle heart and weak,  
Didst deem that I should sit me down and mourn?  
Didst think my tearful eye and pallid cheek  
Would bend before thy pity or thy scorn?  
Look on me now—both eye and cheek are dry.  
Good-bye! Good-bye!

As one who on the shore  
Has found some pebble, deeming it a gem,  
But flings it by, to think of it no more,  
When proved unfitting for a diadem—  
So weakling heart do I too fling thee by.  
Good-bye! Good-bye!

I have great faith in life;  
The wide world is not thronged with such as thee.  
I deem time's waves, despite their angry strife,  
Will yet cast on life's shore a gem for me.  
Hand-clasped with thee, I might have let it lie.  
Good-bye! Good-bye!

The day may come, lost friend,  
When thou shalt stand where I am standing now,  
Brooding upon our friendship and its end  
With a strange yearning sorrow on thy brow.  
Too late! too late! I say with tearless eye—  
Good-bye! Good-bye!

M. L. P.

#### INTOXICATION OF THE EAR.

During the hallucinations produced by taking the Indian hemp, the intensity of the sense of sound is most striking. The celebrated Theodore Gaultier related to Dr Moreau, in poetic language—which it is hopeless to attempt to translate, so as to give an idea of the style of this highly imaginative author—the sensations produced. He says that his 'sense of hearing was prodigiously developed. I actually heard the noise of colours—green, red, blue, yellow sounds, reached me in waves perfectly distinct; a glass overthrown, the creaking of a footstool, a word pronounced low, vibrated and shook me like peals of thunder; my own voice appeared to me so loud, that I dared not speak, for fear of shattering the walls around me, or of making me burst like an explosive shell; more than five hundred clocks sang out the hour with an harmonious, silvery sound; every sonorous object sounded like the note of an harmonica or the Æolian harp: I swam or floated in an ocean of sound.' Such is the exaggerated language which has been employed by an individual whose taste and enjoyment of music have rendered his criticism on that art so much sought after.—*Journal of Psychological Medicine.*

Printed and Published by W. and R. CHAMBERS, 47 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH. Also sold by JAMES FRASER, 14 D'Olier Street, DUBLIN, and all Booksellers.